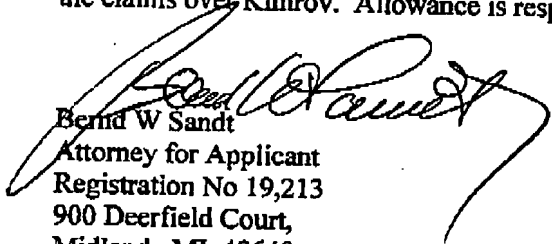


It is further submitted that the claims as currently worded adequately distinguish over the Kimrov reference. The invention comprises the ability of the claimed device to be used as a dipstick device as well as a cassette device. Thus it can be used as a dipstick device because the assay strips protrude beyond the housing and it can be used as a cassette when the cap is placed over the exposed protruding assay strips. In Kimrov the housing extends beyond the assay strips so that it is impossible to use the disclosed device as dipstick.

Given the enclosed feature of the assay strips in Kimrov, it is submitted that Kimrov further fails to show a cap that would cover exposed assay strips and convert the dipstick assay into a cassette assay by providing an opening in the cover to allow for contact of the sample with the assay strip.

It is submitted that the foregoing discussion demonstrates the patentability of the claims over Kimrov. Allowance is respectfully requested.



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